



## City of Santa Barbara Transportation & Circulation Committee *Staff Report*

**DATE:** June 27, 2019

**TO:** Transportation and Circulation Committee (TCC) Members

**FROM:** Jessica W. Grant, Supervising Transportation Planner

**SUBJECT:** Cliff Drive Vision Zero and Active Transportation Corridor Planning Effort

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### **RECOMMENDATION**

That the Transportation and Circulation Committee hear a presentation from staff regarding the Cliff Drive Vision Zero and Active Transportation Corridor Planning Effort.

### **BACKGROUND**

Prior to December 2013, Cliff Drive was part of Caltrans' State Route 225, which was a seven mile urban route looping south from Highway 101 in Santa Barbara. The state route followed Las Positas Road, south from Highway 101, to Elings Park, along Cliff Drive, east from Arroyo Burro Beach to Montecito Street, where it then looped back to Highway 101 along Castillo Street.

In 2011, the Mesa Architects, a neighborhood volunteer group, requested a road diet along SR 225 between Meigs Road and Loma Alta Drive to reduce excess vehicle speed and collisions, improve driveway access for residents, shorten pedestrian crossings, and add bike lanes. In August 2011, Caltrans applied a road diet to this section of SR 225 after a pavement maintenance project.

In December 2013, the SR 225 was relinquished from Caltrans to the City of Santa Barbara with a small section of SR 225 remaining Castillo Street between Montecito Street and Highway 101. This relinquishment open the door for many future City capital projects. In spring 2017, a roundabout at the intersection of Las Positas and Cliff Drive was constructed. This project significantly improved the level of service of the intersection. A 2.6-mile-long multiuse path along Las Positas, from the Las Positas/Cliff Drive Intersection to the Las Positas/Modoc Intersection, and then heading north along Modoc to the Modoc/Calle De Los Amigos Intersection (last major intersection in the City limits in the Hidden Valley neighborhood) will be under construction in 2020. The Las Positas/Modoc Multiuse Path is a major regional and local connector for area schools, Elings Park, and Arroyo Burro Beach.

While the above capital projects are major improvements to vehicular, pedestrian and bicycle circulation along the Las Positas Road corridor, resident desired safety and mobility improvements to Cliff Drive have not been addressed. Calls for improvements have been

echoed by many area residents and Mesa - neighborhood organizations during these capital planning efforts and are reflected in the Council adopted Five Year Capital Improvement Plan (most recent version is 2020-2024), the Bicycle Master Plan (2016), where the community requested a cycle track or Class 4 bike lane along Cliff Drive, and Vision Zero Strategy (2018), where Council prioritized Cliff Drive as one of the 23 high priority corridors in the City needing increased safety, health, and equitable mobility for all.

## **CLIFF DRIVE VISION ZERO AND ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION CORRIDOR PLANNING EFFORT**

To initiate this planning effort, Council approved a contract for Traffic Engineering Services with Kittelson and Associates on June 4, 2019, to study traffic signal and roundabout alternatives at Cliff Drive and Loma Alta Drive, Cliff Drive and the SBCC West Campus, and the intersection at Cliff Drive and Mesa Lane/Flora Vista. The reason this contract is important is because the City needs to figure out how to get a bike path through intersections at Flora Vista/Mesa Lane, and Loma Alta, without affecting the intersection's operations or level of service. From a design perspective, these intersections are very challenging and without potential solutions, there will not be the possibility of a cycle track along Cliff Drive. The anticipated enhanced crosswalk locations are along Cliff at Santa Cruz, Fellowship, Oliver or Camino Calma, and Oceano or Weldon Roads.

This planning effort is also an opportunity to collaborate with Santa Barbara City College to improve safety at their two campus entrances off Cliff Drive.

There will be another call for projects from the Active Transportation Grant Program and Highway Safety Improvement Program in spring of 2020, and the City would like to pursue grant applications for these programs based on resident feedback from the past 8 years. Staff plans to hold additional public meetings in late 2019 to discuss the grants' application processes and what eligible items for funding under each grant source are. The public meetings will help the City finalize the scope of the potential cycling facilities, crosswalk locations, safe routes to school connections, and traffic safety improvements along Cliff Drive. The Active Transportation Program is a statewide competitive grant funding program. About 20 percent of project applications are funded, so it is crucial to have a comprehensive corridor plan together in time for the grant application that includes corridor-wide safety improvements for cyclists and pedestrians.